

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
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*A Naval Expeditionary Task Group in Operations Other Than War*

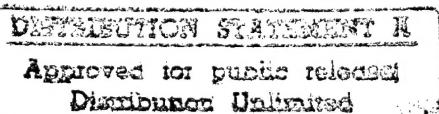
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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.



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Abstract of

*A Naval Expeditionary Task Group in Operations Other Than War*

Commanders-in-Chief (CinCs) have used naval expeditionary forces extensively to meet their peacetime engagement responsibilities to the National Military Strategy. Faced with limited forces to meet a wide range of missions, from humanitarian relief to peace keeping, operators have used the conventional solution of applying traditional naval strengths to these crises. The current doctrine of keeping Carrier Battle Groups (CVBGs) or Amphibious Ready Groups/Marine Expeditionary Units (ARG/MEUs) together to respond to Operations Other Than War (OOTW) missions restricts needed flexibility. If this conventional model continues, the problem for operational planners will only worsen as the Cinc tries to meet a wider array of activity over a vast AOR.

A solution to this problem is twofold: develop a theater campaign plan that links actions to a national strategic aim, and incorporate a new operational design that tailors naval forces to missions. These integrated tailored forces, or Naval Expeditionary Task Groups (NETGs), would be capable of exploiting technological advances in command and control, operational fires and mobility to expand the Cinc's influence within his AOR. These NETGs could also be capable of working with multi-national forces in regional contingencies to achieve greater efficiencies and to share the economic and manpower burden with coalition partners.

## Preface

*"Amphibious flexibility is the greatest strategic asset that a sea-based Power possesses. It creates a distraction to a continental enemy's concentration that is most advantageously disproportionate to the resources employed."<sup>1</sup>*

- B. H. Liddell Hart

Liddell Hart is not the only military intellectual to discuss disproportionate advantage as an operational concept. Julian S. Corbett in his treatise, Some Principles of Maritime Strategy distinguishes between those operations that were oriented on war objectives and those "operation(s) ... designed not for permanent conquest, but as a method of disturbing our enemy's plans and strengthening the hands of our allies and our own position."<sup>2</sup> While Corbett expressed this idea of limited intervention in terms of supporting operations, the same concept can be applied to Commander-in-Chief (Cinc) responsibilities in Operations Other Than War (OOTW).

Recent world events required the Commander-in-Chief Europe (CinCEur) to be prepared to conduct a Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) of U.S. forces in Bosnia, to plan the evacuation of U.S. forces from Macedonia, to conduct the Tactical Recovery of Aircraft/Personnel (TRAP) in Bosnia, and simultaneously to participate in multi-national exercises. A CinC, faced with these challenges at the OOTW level, is unable

to achieve more than one or two requirements simultaneously with the assigned naval forces.

How then is a Cinc to meet all the competing requirements of a National Military Strategy of flexible and selective engagement in the area of OOTW with limited resources? Liddel Hart and Julian Corbett both address economy of force as the answer in terms of achieving disproportionate results through the use of traditional naval strengths. A modern application of this solution rests in the development of a campaign plan for OOTW that takes advantage of an operational design for the employment of naval forces as smaller self-contained elements.

Today while the Carrier Battle Group (CVBG) and Amphibious Ready Group/Marine Expeditionary Unit (ARG/MEU) steam off the coast of Bosnia, other multi-national engagement requirements of lesser priority are being cancelled. The challenge now and for the future is to take an *integrated* approach to the operational employment of naval forces to extend areas of engagement. In this way CinCs can achieve greater influence over a larger geographic area simultaneously, better fulfilling their responsibilities to the National Military Strategy.

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## ***Chapter I. Introduction***

Each combatant CinC has the functional responsibility to: "Employ forces within that command *as necessary* to carry out missions assigned to the command."<sup>3</sup> How does a CinC, operating with limited resources and confronted with a National Military Strategy that encompasses a policy of flexible and selective engagement, achieve these assigned missions over vast geographic regions in an environment of OOTW?<sup>4</sup> Additionally, the CinCs must operate within the domain of the National Security Strategy that calls for *engagement and enlargement*.<sup>5</sup>

The argument exists that the National Security Strategy does not logically fit a defense policy resulting in an ever shrinking military. This strategy policy mismatch poses a challenge to CinCs trying to meet growing engagement responsibilities in OOTW with limited resources. The answer to this problem lies not only in the arena of policy debate; solutions exist within the military resources available now and from technological advances coming on line in the near future.

To better employ current resources and coming technological advances, a new operational design is required that accommodates OOTW within a campaign context. The post cold war era and the reemergence of coalition warfare has produced an international environment where military

engagement activities play an ever increasing role in the execution of strategic national aims. This new situation allows the operational artist to exploit an operational design that takes advantage of the employment of naval forces as smaller self-contained elements, each with capabilities in command and control, operational fires, and mobility and maneuver. These *Naval Expeditionary Task Groups (NETGs)* would be comprised of assets from the CVBG and ARG/MEU, but would operate independent from it, in mission tailored organizations, deployed over dispersed geographic zones, within a CinC's Area of Responsibility (AOR). The NETGs would maintain the ability to concentrate for regional war contingencies.

#### *Conventional Naval Doctrine Problems in OOTW*

Forward deployed naval forces are generally organized as CVBGs, ARGs, and MEUs. Currently, these naval expeditionary forces deploy as a Naval Expeditionary Task Force (NETF): a mission oriented concept that focuses on an area of operations and employs the force to positively influence events in the area.<sup>6</sup> These units are organized based on complementary capabilities and trained, evaluated, and certified "mission capable" by a centralized authority, their component commander. The NETF operates as a unit and when assigned a mission, typically all subordinate elements are included.

An example of this operating design is seen in the

training and certification process before Mediterranean deployments. Here, the NETF goes through a series of exercises that include both blue water operations and amphibious landings. The NETF operates as a single entity under the NETF commander (the CVBG Commander), utilizing the complementary strengths from within the CVBG and ARG/MEU to meet mission requirements.

The NETF is a formidable organization capable of sending a direct message to any adversary that challenges it in a regional war contingency. However, once deployed the inefficiencies of such a large unit are immediately recognized and the NETF splits up. The CVBG goes one way the ARG/MEU another and at times individual ships conduct engagement activities. While the movement of these naval forces is planned in advance, at times individual actions appear to lack connectivity to a larger strategic aim. The coordination and employment of naval forces, as outlined in a campaign plan and oriented to a new operational design, will provide the Cinc greater flexibility in the employment of his naval forces.

For the operational artist, the distinction between the NETG and the current operational model is independence. NETGs are tailored to meet specific mission requirements. The commander of the NETF would provide the supported NETG commander an integrated naval force capable of meeting the Cinc's OOTW mission. Once dispatched, the supported NETG commander is responsible to the Cinc for reporting and mission

accomplishment. It is this level of independence that provides the greatest roadblock to the implementation of such a design. Conventional doctrines emphasis on headquarters oversight, top down control, and overwhelming response, restricts the options available to the CinC when employing naval forces in OOTW.

The Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps have recognized the fact that, faced with smaller forces and larger commitments in the littoral, effectiveness and efficiency can only be gained through integration of naval forces.<sup>7</sup> The NETG concept goes a step beyond just integration to say that naval forces should also operate in independent, mission tailored units, capable of doing the CinC's bidding in OOTW activities at the lower end of the spectrum of conflict. These independent activities must be coordinated in a campaign plan to achieve the desired disproportionate effect of economy of force operations toward the strategic aim.

## *Chapter II. Campaign Plan Solution*

FMFM 1-1 states: "Economy of effort is an essential element in campaign (or operational) design. Any activity or operation that does not contribute directly or derivatively, in some necessary way to this aim is unjustifiable."<sup>8</sup> The use of NETGs is one way to make fewer naval forces contribute more to the strategic aim.

What benefit does a campaign plan provide versus the

current system of port visits, combined training exercises, and show of force operations? My own experience includes split ARG/MEU operations with ships engaged in the celebration for the 50th anniversary of D-Day in France, Partnership For Peace port visits in the Black Sea, and as a TRAP/NEO force in support of Operations "Provide Promise" and "Deny Flight." While each of these events was successful at the unit level, a campaign plan would provide a framework for the theater commander to analyze and evaluate the sequencing of these events in time and space to achieve strategic aims.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps once evaluated from a theater perspective, other employment alternatives could have provided greater influence throughout the AOR.

A theater perspective of the ARG/MEU operations in which I was involved reveals economy of effort, but did the ARG/MEU have a disproportionate influence, and were the forces mission tailored for independent operations? The capabilities that were removed from the ARG/MEU to conduct these OOTW were at times detrimental to the remaining force in the event of a crisis mission, for instance a NEO. Detached operations such as those above simply match ships to current requirements and lack an integrated theater level approach. The assignment of naval forces to engagement activities requires a broader vision from the CinC. This vision for OOTW should be incorporated in a campaign plan that ties together now disparate operations into a cohesive plan.

When OOTW activities are combined together and viewed from the CinC's perspective, what really exists is a series of major naval operations without a campaign plan. The difficulty facing operational planners is that, without this campaign master plan, it is hard to adjust the employment of naval forces, because no baseline exists from which success can be measured. The resistance to campaign planning especially as it relates to OOTW is that translating strategic aims into operational design requires planners to correlate a variety of perspectives.<sup>10</sup> When a CinC is faced with numerous objectives in his AOR and changing strategic aims at the political level, the development of a definitive campaign plan for OOTW is just too hard. Therefore, the campaign plan should be a framework document that establishes a baseline for the exchange of ideas, concepts, and measures of success, among a variety of different agencies and services representing a number of varying perspectives.<sup>11</sup>

### ***Planning Considerations***

The TRAP mission conducted by the 24th MEU in Bosnia, publicly known as the Scott O'Grady rescue, set the stage for an operational planning dilemma. CinCEur had numerous operational responsibilities to meet at this same time. These included support to Operations Provide Comfort, Provide Promise and Deny Flight; possible NEOs in Bosnia, Macedonia, and Algeria; humanitarian relief for Rwanda and multi-national

training exercises. What if other crises were to occur? Competing contingencies at the time of the rescue included a NEO of the U.S. Army forces (Task Force Able Sentry) in Macedonia and a worse case, in terms of reaction time for naval forces deployed to the Adriatic, a NEO in Algeria. The traditional naval solution that keeps the CVBG/ARG together falls short under these circumstances. Current naval doctrine leads the operational artist to reason in terms of this all or nothing approach. This means the CinC must find other forces, as well as the lift to move them, while naval forces sit idle in the Adriatic awaiting unlikely contingencies. The cost to the CinC comes in two forms for this type of reasoning: strategic mobility to move alternative forces, and underutilized deployed assets. "The warfighting CinCs understand better than anyone else the inherent utility of naval forces. Over and above a reduced impact on a host nation's infrastructure, there is an attractiveness to maritime forces that goes beyond sea basing. **There is a price associated with the movement of forces into or within a theater, and that price is paid in terms of precious mobility assets.** (emphasis added)"<sup>12</sup>

The key concern for the CinC is to balance efficiency and effectiveness in the organization he employs to meet the crisis. In naval terms, do you keep *all* the CVBG assets together, and what about the ARG/MEU? Naval assets not needed for either mission, e.g., portions of combat service support

units, might be detached and used in humanitarian efforts or mobile training teams to maintain selective engagement within the AOR. The dilemma then for the operator is to employ a force tailored to the mission and to keep the extraneous elements fully employed in other peacetime engagement activities.

On the surface this dilemma may seem easy to solve. However, when a detached or integrated course of action is proposed in an operational plan it is quickly criticized. Dispatching appropriate NETGs meets many obstacles. First, the human one, no one wants to be left behind. Second, the authority of command - these are my assets to employ. Third, doctrine says never split the force. This is great doctrine for war at sea versus the old Soviet Navy but not suited to todays OOTW. Finally, our crisis orientation limits the thinking of todays operational artist to an inefficient approach to the employment of forces. Some operators view forces as free goods during crises due to the immediate nature of events. After the fact, mission accomplishment is the only measure of success and mission efficiency is often ignored.

Off the coast of Bosnia today the answer is to essentially keep everything together. But is this the most efficient operational use of naval expeditionary forces in OOTW? The logic of the linear programming approach to engagement and crisis response leads to the current situation where units and missions are prioritized and those lesser

missions, usually in the area of peacetime engagement, "fall out." The failure to achieve greater influence within the AOR in this case lies in the mind of the operational artist. Instead of viewing multiple requirements in OOTW as unrelated, individual activities, the operational artist must look at the theater strategy and develop a campaign plan that relates the actions of the NETG to a larger aim.

### *Chapter III. Operational Design Solution*

The past effectiveness of conventional operational concepts rests on historical successes. Previous use of CVBGs and ARG/MEUs as a response force in OOTW has been successful; however, it was not necessarily efficient, nor is it able to meet the future multiple engagement requirements outlined in the National Military Strategy. A significant correlation between the traditional Cold War model and its future potential use in a post Cold War world that requires flexible engagement does not exist. Alternatively, the NETG design provides the Cinc with a ready, timely, and in most cases, an economical force to meet future challenges.

### *From Concept to Operational Use*

To Marines the characteristics of the NETG operational design are familiar; its mission focus, flexibility, and adaptability in changing environments are admired qualities. The world order is changing, and conventional operational

thought continues to be challenged. Some Marines may view the NETG design as a risk, and argue that the "MEU(SOC) - Once a Threat, Now Threatened"<sup>13</sup> and "The Jewel in the Crown of Our Corps"<sup>14</sup> is being jeopardized by "adaptive force packaging ... assets with jury-rigged forces - a backward and unacceptable approach in a post Cold War era."<sup>15</sup> These same types of arguments are applied equally by sailors in defense of traditional CVBG operations. I find this thinking contradicts Marine Corps doctrine. FMFM-1, Warfighting, states, "As the situation changes, it may of course be necessary to restructure the MAGTF."<sup>16</sup> While problems did exist with Marines embarked aboard carriers and U.S. Army helicopters launching from carrier decks into Haiti, these first steps in the application of adaptive force packages showed the way for operational planners to think outside the box.

The difficulty that remains is to incorporate a vision among operational planners where:

*"Naval Forces can be continuously tailored to developing events. The answer to every situation may not be a carrier battle group. It may be an amphibious readiness group and a surface action group with Tomahawk missiles."*<sup>17</sup>

#### From The Sea

"From the Sea may be too radical for some and not radical enough for others, but its measured, evolutionary approach to changing security requirements is the correct course for the predicted future."<sup>18</sup> The future is one where the likely employment of NETGs will be in support of CinCs, acting in a capacity other than war. Critics of this operational design

charge that the new focus undermines traditional naval missions and that the naval service is not equipped to operate in this new environment. Nevertheless, items such as the tilt-rotor aircraft (MV-22), Advanced Assault Amphibian Vehicle (AAAV), the Global Command and Control System, and Joint Deployable Intelligence Support System are components already sourced to meet these future requirements. All members of the Joint Planning and Execution Community need to become familiar with the White Paper From the Sea. It is not only a naval paper, but one that directly impacts on the Cincs and how they will meet a National Military Strategy of flexible engagement, deterrence and conflict prevention.

In OOTW, the definitive task of the operational artist is to influence the "enemy" to change his behavior on his own free will through peacetime engagement, deterrence, or the application of the minimum force necessary to make him see the light. Still, challenges to the operational concept of integrated, detached and mission tailored forces do exist. To achieve disproportionate advantage in OOTW from the sea, questions concerning command and control (C2), operational fires, and mobility must be addressed. With an operational design that disperses NETGs throughout a theater of operations, the solution to the Cinc's dilemma of extending engagement activity and influence within an AOR requires enhanced C2, an operational fire support plan that is integrated, and extended range of the craft that make naval

expeditionary forces mobile and maneuverable.

### *Command and Control*

In an operational application, detached assets of a CVBG and ARG/MEU could be tailored into several NETGs operating in great depth and breadth within a CinC's AOR. To make this work, what is required is a concept for C2 that allows for collaboration between mission tailored task elements, the CinC, and their parent organizations (the CVBG or ARG/MEU). This enhanced concept of command and control requires a flat versus hierarchical approach to communications and mission tasking. The technical capability already exists to connect dispersed operating units through a network. The NETG commanders would then operate within the guidelines of their mission and their higher commander's intent. Oversight is achieved through the NETGs providing information to the CinC or designated joint headquarters, and parent commands on an as required basis via the net. This type of system provides visibility on a wide range of activities to the CinC and his staff for events occurring within his AOR. Also, it eliminates stovepipe organizations and provides real time information for those on the net.

To protect its own C2 and exploit potential threats, the NETG must also contain an information warfare element. Information warfare provides the operational artist a new tool for use in OOTW. "Command and control warfare advocates view

this leveraging of information as the key to a smaller and less expensive military force continuing to underpin U.S. foreign policy in an unpredictable and disorderly world."<sup>19</sup> Use of information warfare is consistent with the principle of disproportionate advantage and provides a synergistic effect to physically detached NETGs in OOTW allowing smaller forces to accomplish the same mission.

### *Operational Fires*

Operational artists acknowledge that OOTW covers a wide spectrum of missions at the lower end of the scale of conflict to include situations requiring fire support. The idea of a NETG operating from the sea in an environment such as Somalia or Bosnia may leave the impression that these NETGs are operating "alone and unafraid." As the operational artist begins to cross this gray area between peacetime engagement to low intensity conflict, the challenge is to view fire support not in terms of direct support to power projection actions but as a tool to shape actions within a theater. NETGs should be organized to provide those necessary organic fires in support of tactical actions. Operational fires should take a theater perspective, permitting those elements conducting peacetime engagement activities reasonable assurance and freedom of action within their operating areas.

As the threat to a particular mission increases, for example, an unprovoked attacked on a NETG conducting a

humanitarian relief mission, the NETG commander may request use of Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles (TLAM), or strike aircraft to attack staging areas, C2, or Lines of Communication (LOCs) of those unfriendly elements that threaten the peacetime mission. The 800 mile standoff capability of the TLAM is one example of how a sea based platform, operating detached, and from a central position could provide coverage to multiple NETGs. This type of operational fire is especially attractive in an underdeveloped theater where the relative small size of the NETG, or ability to concentrate a larger naval force quickly, may preclude major offensive operations.<sup>20</sup>

### *Mobility and Maneuver*

Imagine the operational design described in From The Sea, where the CinC employs a NETG, not a CVBG or ARG/MEU, to meet an OOTW mission. Those with strict organizational views might raise the red flag, and quote the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan which states, "Marine forces are deployed as fully integrated MAGTFs."<sup>21</sup> CVBG proponents would argue about airborne early warning, electronic support aircraft and necessary command and control suites. Doing more with less, the critics would argue, diminishes the capacity to dominate a particular operational area or space. However, during OOTW if the CinC applies overwhelming capacity to a limited portion of a theater to achieve Battle Space Dominance he limits maneuver

space within a theater and may jeopardize other portions of his engagement strategy. A better solution is to apply a **maneuver warfare** approach to mission accomplishment and not seek dominance through overwhelming capacity (attrition) but disproportionate influence through an integrated, tailored organization.

This maneuver warfare approach to operational design is characterized in a naval context as maneuver from the sea. "What distinguishes Operational Maneuver From the Sea (OMFTS) from all other species of operational maneuver is the extensive use of the sea as a means of gaining advantage ...."<sup>22</sup> The rationale of using the sea as a medium to gain disproportionate advantage is not new. Wellington's ability to secure the Port of Lisbon against the onslaught of Napoleon's army into Portugal was successful because the British used the sea as maneuver space against the French.

OMFTS and Wellington's operations, are both defined in terms of fighting the nation's war. In war operations, the definitive task is to **impose** your will on the enemy. OMFTS' exclusive focus on war should be a cause of some concern to the operational artist. While this operational concept recognizes the responsibility for naval forces to conduct OOTW, it proposes that the "... naval expeditionary forces of the future will not be designed specifically for such tasks."<sup>23</sup> This mentality is restrictive and fails to take fullest advantage of the capabilities of a NETG and the

greater influence it could create within an area of operations. Operational planners with less resources and fewer forward land based assets need greater mobility and maneuverability from naval assets to meet the engagement requirements of OOTW.

To expand influence within a theater of operations requires extended reach. The NETG is the principal element of achieving that goal and increasing leverage. In order to project the power embarked on the NETG requires assets that can "cross the great distances involved; reduce the limitations imposed by terrain and weather; and most importantly, to seemlessly [sic] transition from maneuvering at sea to maneuvering ashore."<sup>24</sup> The MV-22, AAV, and Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) are the assets naval expeditionary forces will use to extend reach. The capabilities of these warfighting machines adds a new depth to the theater that will give the operational planner greater intratheater mobility and the disproportionate advantage he seeks. As long as these assets tend to be conserved under the ARG/MEU in conventional operations and deployment schemes, their full utility and application to OOTW missions could be minimized. Therefore, the NETG provides one method to achieve the greatest benefit from these advances.

The future NETG involved in peacetime engagement must have the flexibility to relocate quickly to a crisis and still have the ability to conduct combat operations on the lower end

of the spectrum of conflict. Maneuver in OOTW is the movement of NETGs in a theater, linked to a strategic aim. A prerequisite for operational maneuver is that the CinC have secure LOCs for intratheater movement and resupply. This case supports the need for such traditional missions as maintaining freedom of shipping lanes. It does not require that these missions be conducted by using conventional CVBGs. A theater focused approach, vice a sea control approach, allows the operational planner greater efficiency in maneuvering NETGs within established operating areas.

#### *Chapter IV. Multi-National NETGs*

Up to this point the focus of the operational design solution has been exclusively on U.S. naval assets in OOTW from a strictly CinC perspective. Let's expand the concept further to suggest that a NETG, in and of itself, can also meet some of the CinC's OOTW engagement requirements when it is deployed as a coalition expeditionary unit. The overall emerging picture throughout the world is one where multi-national cooperation is the best course of action to achieve theater strategic goals. Humanitarian efforts in Bangladesh and peace enforcement operations in Bosnia and Somalia are recent examples of this phenomenon. In OOTW, nations are more likely to seek closer international partnerships to achieve regional objectives. In doing so states seek to achieve favorable world opinion, legitimacy for actions taken, and

reduced individual risk by sharing the burden.

The European theater, specifically NATO coalition partners that have become wealthier and more able, are now expected to bear increasing responsibility for regional security both financially and in terms of an overall military contribution in peacetime engagement activities. Captain Adriano Sarto, an Italian Navy officer stated in Proceedings that,

*"... cooperation must go beyond force integration - which already is adequate - to include increased integration of missions. We must transform from episodic to ordinary the combined execution of missions of mutual interests."*<sup>25</sup>

Within the European theater today coalition forces in Bosnia are embroiled in a peace enforcement mission that could be characterized as episodic. The mission in Bosnia certainly falls within the definition of OOTW. In essence, Bosnia is a *major operation* (continental and maritime in character) in an immature theater of operations. Also, it is clear that the operational plan established in Bosnia, links the tactical actions to the national strategy goals as negotiated in the Dayton Peace Accords. What is not apparent to the operational artist is how these theater specific actions are incorporated into a regional campaign plan and what is the impact on naval expeditionary forces in the region.

When the news media took on the question of troop deployments to Bosnia, the focus was on how many people will

it take on the ground to accomplish the peace enforcement mission, and how many troops are other nations sending? The integration of military forces ashore and contributions by coalition partners goes almost unquestioned and is well rooted in the American psyche. No one seems to question the fact a U.S. CVBG and ARG/MEU stand essentially alone, just over the horizon, ready to support not only U.S. troops but also coalition partners. One must ask, what elements of the U.S. theater strategy are going undone to meet this commitment? Canceled multi-national training exercises, reduced response time to meet other regional crises, and less deterrence presence in areas of instability are surely a few.

I am not critical of the effectiveness and capability of those naval forces deployed to this area of operation. What I am critical of is that this type of operational concept does not achieve efficiency in terms of a broader regional focus for OOTW.

Captain Sarto discussed a maritime operational concept that is characterized by a regional approach based on the geographic location of partners.<sup>26</sup> In a larger scheme, if European navies adopted such a concept U.S. naval expeditionary forces that were operating as NETGs could integrate into these standing European expeditionary forces. This action would increase engagement activities and expand operational influence in the region, while taking advantage of the expertise these coalition regional subgroups could

provide. Active participation by American NETGs and coregional partners could prevent the "polarization effect," where one coalition partner holds exclusive dominance in a region.<sup>27</sup> Regional dominance by one coalition partner would be contrary to a larger aim of a unified theater strategy.

Multi-polarism in the world and Europe in particular has presented a new challenge to the operational artist. Reduced assets available from the U.S. will require a theater strategy of cooperation. The operational concept of NETGs, integrated with regional actor's naval and air capabilities will provide the CinC greater coverage within his AOR while maintaining the flexibility to meet commitments in OOTW.

#### *Chapter V. Conclusion*

The most obvious challenge facing the warfighting CinCs is the ability to maintain influence over a vast geographic area, with limited resources and in a world order that is in flux after the collapse of the former Soviet Union. OMFTS provides a concept for expanding the battle space influence within a sector of a theater of operations for mid to high intensity conflict. Operational artists need to expand this concept to incorporate the efficiencies required in OOTW to achieve disproportionate influence. Mission tailored NETGs that exploit technological advances are one way to achieve success. Technology has increased operational mobility and tempo and should be included in an expanded concept for

theater wide engagement. The range and speed of the MV-22 and AAV, combined with the flexible employment of U.S. Navy ships, and the effectiveness and lethality of modern weapons will allow for an integrated approach to achieve the CinC's theater objectives. By exploiting over-the-horizon lift, fire support and advanced integrated C2 systems, the CinC will be able to achieve an operational design to support dispersed NETGs in OOTW. The resulting increased operational coverage will provide the CinC needed flexibility in peacetime and deterrence operations throughout a larger portion of his AOR.

This greater influence needs to be cohesive and part of a larger campaign plan for OOTW. A maritime campaign for OOTW should include regional coalition partners who contribute to operational flexibility and efficiency, fostering closer relations, and by their existence achieve theater stability and deterrence. The campaign plan should be a flexible framework document that addresses the strategic aim and identifies those critical factors which we believe will lead most effectively and economically to the end state. In OOTW, the operational artist must develop a scheme that focuses on critical factors that directly contribute to the strategic aim to achieve the desired goal.<sup>28</sup>

OMFTS coupled with an operational design that coordinates decentralized and detached actions within a theater will achieve the CinC's requirement to promote regional stability through selective engagement. The National Security Strategy

of Engagement and Enlargement and the National Military Strategy both clearly reject an isolationist approach and call for flexible response with a global perspective. For the United States, NETG's could provide that disproportionate influence and ability to remain engaged, performing missions of forward presence, deterrence, coalition building, and humanitarian and peacekeeping operations. The NETG becomes a prudent choice for operational planners, given the geographic expanse and multiple nation contacts within an AOR, the constraints of limited overseas bases, and a finite amount of strategic mobility.

The future in OOTW requires the operational artist to think of the naval forces not in terms of structure and size but capability. The CVBG and ARG/MEU will remain as the centerpiece for developing options to meet missions of mid to high intensity conflict. However, as planners try to meet the myriad of requirements for OOTW, these larger organizations should be seen as reservoirs of capability to develop flexible peacetime, deterrence and low intensity conflict alternatives.

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